

Your family archive and family history

Your family archive may turn out to be the springboard for some research into your family tree. If that's the case, you're in the right place! As well as offering courses and workshops on exploring your past, the Local and Family History Library offers these resources:

Ancestry.com – Free access (in every Leeds library) to census records, BMD indexes, WW1 records and more.

Maps – Over 2000 historical and OS maps, covering everything from geology and shops, to electoral wards.

Books – Over 50,000 items about different aspects of the city and its region.

Church records – Parish registers detailing baptisms, marriages and burials around Leeds and parts of Yorkshire.

Magazines – Local periodicals including *The Dalesman*, *Yorkshire Life* and *Family Tree*.

Trade directories – Names and addresses of Yorkshire people and businesses since 1784.

Birth, marriage and death indexes – Covering the whole of England and Wales since 1837.

Electoral registers – Voting lists from the present day back to 1832.

Our opening hours

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|--------------------|----------|
| Monday – Wednesday | 9am-7pm |
| Thursday | 9am-6pm |
| Friday | 9am-5pm |
| Saturday | 10am-5pm |
| Sunday | 10am-3pm |

Email us at localandfamilyhistory@leeds.gov.uk with your enquiries, or to be added to our mailing list and receive our quarterly newsletter.

For more information call 0113 247 6016
or visit www.leeds.gov.uk/libraries

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Leeds Central Library Local and Family History Research Guides

Your Family Archive

What is a family archive? This leaflet looks at some of the things you might want to keep for future generations – or just for yourself – as well as how to collect and look after them.

Contact us for more information:

Visit: www.leeds.gov.uk/localandfamilyhistory

Email: localandfamilyhistory@leeds.gov.uk

Tel. (0113) 247 8290

Why create a family archive?

If you have an old photo of your parents' wedding, still hold onto the first ever shoes you wore as a child, or simply keep your birth certificate in a safe place, then you already have a family archive. Some people make a special effort to keep such items out of harm's way for various reasons, such as:

- To remind them of people and occasions from the past
- To share with friends and family members
- To help with family history research
- To bequeath to future generations

What belongs in your family archive?

Family documents – e.g. certificates, legal papers, diaries, letters.

Pictures – e.g. photos, drawings, maps, posters, slides, adverts.

Objects – e.g. wedding dress, baby clothes, trophies, magazines.

Mementoes – e.g. newspaper clippings, concert tickets, travel papers, holiday souvenirs, old school books.

Heirlooms – e.g. grandma's brooch, furniture, ornaments.

Digital items – e.g. sound recordings, video, computer files.

To keep or not to keep? Will the item still mean something to you in ten years? Would it be impossible to replace? If you have too *much*, use the 'rule of three' – keep the three most representative souvenirs of an event, or three best items of their type.

Some practical tips

Think outside the box: We mean this literally! You may have a special box to keep your archive in... or you may think of your entire *house* as your archive. Having a collection doesn't necessarily mean keeping it all in one place.

Stay organized: If you *do* have a lot of stuff, especially paperwork, use a system, such as storing your items by *date* or by *person*.

Minimize wear and tear: Protect originals in plastic sleeves and make photocopies or computer scans to look through and share.

Expanding your family archive

Think about what you *don't* have. A relative or friend may donate items to enhance your collection if they see your archive has a purpose and value, but there are also ways of getting hold of things you need. Here are some of the ways the library can help with this...

► Newspaper articles and pictures from the past

Perhaps you remember being in the paper as a child, or are wondering if your parents' wedding got a mention... The library has full archives for the *Yorkshire Evening Post*, *Yorkshire Post* and *Leeds Mercury*, as well as lots of other local newspapers. Some, including national titles, may also be available through the library's online resources. Visit: www.leeds.gov.uk/leisure/Pages/Online-resources.aspx

► Old photographs of Leeds... Do we have any of your house?

Visit the library's online photograph archive at: www.leodis.net. Here you can order and buy photos using your credit/debit card (various sizes and finishes are available), or simply print any images you find.

• **Search tip:** Start with *Advanced Search* from the left-side menu bar on the homepage, then change the *Records* option to '50 to view' and the *View* to 'Thumbnail images'. This means you'll see the maximum number of search results per page, as well as a small preview of each photo.

► Birth, marriage and death certificates

These have been administered by the British government since 1837. You can buy one relating to any person but you have to provide four pieces of information to the General Register Office (GRO) in order to do so: (1) name of person (2) year and quarter of event (3) reference number (4) place where registered. You can usually find these details using indexes on Ancestry.com (free to use in all Leeds Libraries) or microfilm reels in the Local and Family History Library – then order certificates online at: www.gro.gov.uk/gro